



Hugh E. Weathers  
Commissioner

State of South Carolina  
**Department of Agriculture**

Wade Hampton Office Building  
P.O. Box 11280  
Columbia, S.C. 29211

Telephone: (803) 734-2190  
Fax: (803) 734-2192  
E-Mail: [hweathe@scca.sc.gov](mailto:hweathe@scca.sc.gov)

May 25, 2011

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

At the South Carolina Department of Agriculture, our mission is to promote and nurture the growth and development of South Carolina's agricultural industry and its related businesses. Our shared vision is for the state's economy to grow and prosper providing everyone, producers and consumers, opportunities to enjoy the fruits of agriculture. Ultimately, our success depends in no small part on the productivity of our agricultural producers, which in turn depends on their efficiency and success in getting high quality goods to consumers.

Farming, like all industries, has evolved into a truly high-tech profession. But limited wireless signals continue to be a challenge in many rural areas, which limits growth for farmers who would otherwise benefit from wireless tools.

In terms of the 11-65 proceeding regarding AT&T's application to combine with T-Mobile, the South Carolina Department of Agriculture is supportive because we support measures that will help put digital tools into the hands of our nation's farmers. These tools will help them monitor trends, better reach customers, and modernize their operations. The result will be greater efficiency and productivity.

At the SCDA we have also benefitted from wireless technology, both to increase supplier and customer satisfaction and increase profits and cut costs. We recently implemented wireless to eliminate the need for data ports in certain areas at the South Carolina State Farmers Markets. Wireless at the farmers markets has facilitated electronic payments by customers and has made our sites more competitive. For example, the Phillips Market Center is now a venue for meetings, workshops, and events. It is equipped with up-to-date technology for effective presentations including high speed wireless Internet access and a range of audiovisual equipment.

Federal Communications Commission  
Page 2  
May, 25, 2011

We hope that you will support the pending application of AT&T and vote in favor of its approval.  
We think it will be good for American farmers and for the country.

Sincerely,



Hugh E. Weathers  
Commissioner of Agriculture

CC:  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker